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STATE FOR NEA/MAG, DRL, EUR/ERA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV PBTS PHUM MO EU

SUBJECT: EU PARLIAMENTARIANS VISIT TO THE WESTERN SAHARA
"POSTPONED"

¶1. This cable is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (SBU) On September 29, a clutch of European diplomats informed Poloffs that two European Union (EU) parliamentarians (MEP's) planned to visit the Western Sahara the following week, having previously visited Tindouf in Algeria, site of Polisario camps and Administration. They acknowledged that the MEP's were known to favor Polisario positions on the Western Sahara issue. The press reported on October 5, however, that five EU parliamentarians had been denied permission to visit the territory. Abdelwahad Radi, the Moroccan speaker of the parliament, sent a letter to the EU speaker saying that the trip, planned for earlier in the week, had to be postponed because the visit was not practical. A new wali (governor) had only recently been appointed and the parliamentarians could not be properly received. The five EU parliamentarians, all of whom are Spanish, three of them late additions, were also identified in the press as being pro-Polisario. No new date was announced. (Comment: The governor was indeed only getting to the territory at the time of the prospective visit, but it appears the Moroccans also put off the visit for political reasons. End Comment.)

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